



SHARPE JAMES  
MAYOR  
NEWARK, NEW JERSEY  
07102

FRIDAY, MAY 6, 1988

FOR RELEASE, SUNDAY, MAY 8, 1988

PLEASE CONTACT: PAM GOLDSTEIN (201) 733-6368

Mayor Sharpe James charged today that the City of Newark has been unfairly blamed for the conditions that still exist in the Amity Village Apartments when a federal agency is responsible for correcting the situation.

The complex is privately owned and is subsidized by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), James pointed out, asserting, "We have done all we can to assist tenants and abate the squalid conditions, but it is up to HUD to move from talk to action."

"If the the City of Newark is having difficulty extraditing the owner of the building from Queens, then surely the federal government can step in and force him to make improvements on his buildings," the Mayor contended.

Roosevelt Stroman of Queens, owner of Amity Village Association, has been charged with several housing code violations, but the City's efforts to extradite him have been impeded because he has not been charged with a felony, James explained.

The Mayor recalled a meeting in New York in February between tenant representatives and Mrs. Geraldine McGann, director of HUD's Region II Office of Housing.

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"And, we continue to be in daily contact with tenants and owners of other subsidized buildings in an attempt to find units for relocation. We also have obtained hard-to-come-by Section 8 subsidized housing certificates for eligible individuals," James noted.

He maintained that the City "will still try to use all available municipal resources in helping tenants who are deserving.

"However, I must reinterate," he cautioned, " tenants cannot allow landlords not to repair their property, followed by a decision not to pay their rent, followed by the landlord abandoning the building, and tenants coming to City Hall looking for a pot of gold.

"If services are not being provided, tenants need to select legal representation, place their rent into an escrow account and keep their buildings viable," James stated.